(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (d) Tuticorin airport is suitable for operation of 50 seater class of aircraft in fair weather conditions and Salem airport is suitable for 100 seater class of aircraft in fair weather conditions. At present no schedule airlines are operating their flights through these airports. Therefore, Airports Authority of India has no plan to upgrade these airports.

Commission to Travel Agents

3640. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines, Air India and Alliance Air have decided to cut Commission to the travel agents;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that tourism industry has been hit very badly after terrorist attacks in India recently; and

(d) if so, the reasons for not giving adequate incentives to tourists and travel related industry by offering more commission to travel agents?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Air India and Indian Airlines/Alliance Air have reduced the commission of travel agents from 9 to 7 per cent effective 01.01.2002 and 01.03.2002 respectively.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Air India and Indian Airlines have introduced various promotional schemes *inter-alia* giving incentive to tourists and agents in addition to normal commission such as (i) special fares in USD are offered to foreign tourists and NRIs visiting various destinations in India; (ii) special package for promotion of

domestic tourism. The package tours are sold through Indian Airlines approved travel agents. A discount of 15% on normal rupee fare is allowed. Agent is also entitled to normal commission on the fare plus 2% incentive commission under this scheme.

IGI Airport

3641. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in The Indian Express, New Delhi edition dated the 9th April, 2002 about the New Delhi international airport;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction to the observations made about the state of affairs of the IGI Airport; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken, if any, to improve the situation thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) All efforts are being made to maintain the facilities at Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi at par with international standards. Enough restaurant facilities are available in the visitors area at departure level, check-in area and transit lounge. The restaurants in check-in area and transit lounge are being maintained by India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) while the one in the visitors area is managed by a private agency. Duty free shops are being run and maintained by the ITDC, which has the desired expertise. The capacity of International Departure is 1050 passengers per hour and that of International Arrival is 1200 passengers per hour. Efforts are being made to enhance the capacity by shifting/ rearranging some of the facilities to reduce congestion. No major construction activity is being taken up at Delhi, Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata Airports as the Government has decided to restructure these airports through long term leasing to the private investors,